



# THE MEXICAN ARMY IN THE PORFIRIATO: A Organizational Review (1880-1910)

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This paper examines the Mexican Army's organizational development during the long Porfiriato (1880-1910). It began in the second presidential period of Porfirio Diaz Mori, continued through the presidency of General Manuel González from 1880 to 1884, and continued apace through the second term of Diaz from December 1884 through beginning of the Mexican Revolution in 1910. Díaz, a hero of the War of the Second French Intervention (1862-1867), the Battle of Puebla (5 May 1862) and the Tuxtepec Revolution (1876), was elected president of Mexico in 1876, following two failed attempts at overthrowing the government in 1871 and 1876. He served seven terms until his 1911 overthrow in the Mexican Revolution. Díaz had even handpicked González as his successor as he controlled the Mexican government from behind the scenes. During his first term as president of Mexico, Porfirio Diaz took pains to build a strong military structure. These reforms embraced the material, moral, and intellectual aspects that derived from the army's new regulations, and emphasized that discipline and obedience were to be the guiding principles for the army. However, in the estimation of the state, which, for political reasons, highlighted the steady reduction of the federal army's troop strength, the Porfirian reforms unintentionally facilitated the growth of the armed uprisings that led to the Mexican Revolution. Thus, the seeds of military reform were also the seeds of military weakness that contributed to the overthrow of the Porfiriato.

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## Size

The available historical sources show widely varying figures regarding the size of the army. Some researchers point out that in 1867 the federal army numbered 800,000 troops,<sup>2</sup> and others say that the with triumph of the Republic against France in 1867, it had 60,000 troops of the line and another 40,000 armed men considered bandits<sup>3</sup>. Much work needs to be done in this area.

Over the decade of the 1870s, the government reduced the size of the army to 37,468. This was due to a military downsizing policy begun by President Benito Juarez and continued by his successor, Sebastian Lerdo de Tejada. According to Francisco Bulnes, Diaz's foreign secretary, the federal army in 1880 numbered 38,000 soldiers with another 20,000 more men in the so-called National Guards. In 1881, with the rise to power of Manuel Gonzales, the army's strength was reduced to 27,500 troops, although the numbers of military personnel ranged around 30,000 soldiers. According to historian Robert Martin Alexius, in 1910, almost at the start of the Mexican Revolution, there were 36,700 soldiers. In contrast Lawrence Taylor mentions 29,000 troops<sup>4</sup> and Alicia Hernandez 25,400. However, despite the disparity in figures a clear downward trend is apparent.

One of the reasons Porfirio Diaz proceeded to dismantle the military was to prevent a *coup d'état*. Given Diaz's own failed *coups d'état* in 1871 and 1876 there is no little irony in his decisión, one which was premised upon personal experience. In addition, Diaz wanted to reduce overall government spending. He instructed the states' governors not to spend the savings brought about by troop reductions in return for government employees, education, or infrastructure. Moreover, Diaz designated the federal army as the only force that could provide security; he forced the governors to disband their personal armies and return to the federal government's control troops, weapons, and ammunition. The army's strength was now reduced by 16,000 troops, about the size of a modern US infantry division<sup>5</sup>.

In 1898, shortly before becoming Minister of War and the Navy, Bernardo Reyes warned that 26,000 armed men scattered throughout the country were insufficient to protect the political system in a country whose population was 13.6 million inhabitants. According to the calculations of Reyes, the army should have been increased by 33% in the infantry and artillery, while the cavalry ought to have risen by 25% to reach at least 34,000 soldiers. Furthermore, Reyes suggested that the federal government create a primary reserve of 3,200 men within the mounted gendarmerie (*Guardia Rural "Los rurales"*) belonging to the Interior Ministry. The increased gendarmerie would also serve as border guards. Reyes also advocated adding another 26,000 troops to create a second tier of reserves organized in each state according to guidelines of the National Guard, bringing the numbers up to 100,000 effectives. According to the vision of Bernardo Reyes, the federal army would muster 160,000 troops<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> Alicia Hernández Chávez. "Origen y ocaso del ejército porfiriano", en: *Historia Mexicana*, Núm. 153. Julio-septiembre 1989, p. 267.

<sup>3</sup> Francisco Bulnes. *Diario de los debates de la Cámara de Diputados*. 15 de noviembre de 1911, p. 15-21.

<sup>4</sup> Lawrence Taylor. *La gran aventura en México*. México, Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes CONACULTA, 1993, Vol. I, p. 108.

<sup>5</sup> Francisco Bulnes. *El verdadero Díaz y la Revolución*. México, Contenido, 1992. pp. 36-37 y 292-293.

<sup>6</sup> Bernardo Reyes. "El Ejército Nacional"; en: Justo Sierra. *Méjico y su evolución social*. México, J. Ballescá y Compañía, Sucesor, 1900, Tomo I, págs. 414-415. See: Reyes, Bernardo. *Ensayo sobre un nuevo sistema de reclutamiento para el ejército y organización de la Guardia Nacional*. San Luis Potosí, Imprenta de Dávalos, 1885.

It was difficult to conceive that such a small army could cover the whole territory. According to the calculations of Bulnes in 1910, 100,000 armed men were needed to monitor 20,000 km of railways throughout the country, in its ports, along the borders, and near the factories, mines, oil installations, and farms to prevent or suppress armed uprisings. These tasks were not feasible with a mere 25,000 regular and irregular soldiers.

When he was appointed Minister of War and the Navy (1900-1902), Bernardo Reyes created the second army reserve, which had such a strong appeal among Mexican youths that at the Independence Day parade on 16 September 1902, about 6,000 reservists more 30,000 marched. But for the group of positivist intellectuals known as "*Los Científicos*" (or the "scientists"), feared that the success of the second reserve could lead to the use of military power by Reyes to become president. Reyes was removed from the cabinet shortly thereafter by presidential decree and the second reserve disappeared. Concern over a coup d'état, while never absent, was temporarily abated.

Mexican Army Troops (1876-1913)<sup>7</sup>:

<b>Year</b>	<b>Troops</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Troops</b>
<b>1876</b>	37 468	<b>1913</b>	69 049
<b>1877</b>	29 864	<b>1913</b>	91 785
<b>1880</b>	38 000	<b>1913</b>	150 000
<b>1881</b>	27 507	<b>1913</b>	200 000
<b>1884</b>	34 050	<b>1914</b>	250 000
<b>1886</b>	35 002	<b>1914</b>	28 323
<b>1893</b>	22 000	<b>1914</b>	38 600
<b>1895</b>	24 489	<b>1916</b>	250 000
<b>1896</b>	30 112	<b>1917</b>	28 323
<b>1898</b>	26 000	<b>1917</b>	38 600
<b>1899</b>	30 885	<b>1918</b>	160 000-185 000
<b>1889</b>	30 805	<b>1918</b>	133 510
<b>1889</b>	29 632	<b>1920</b>	99 595
<b>1901</b>	34 000	<b>1921</b>	120 490
<b>1902</b>	29 966	<b>1923</b>	70 818
<b>1905</b>	28 154	<b>1924</b>	82 735
<b>1906</b>	28 588	<b>1925</b>	62 947
<b>1907</b>	27 696	<b>1926</b>	53 018
<b>1910</b>	25 430	<b>1927</b>	68 728
<b>1910</b>	36 700	<b>1928</b>	67 249
<b>1910</b>	29 000	<b>1929</b>	73 567
<b>1913</b>	32 594	<b>1930</b>	72 556
<b>1913</b>	61 000	<b>1930</b>	63 007

<sup>7</sup> Mario Ramírez Rancaño. "Una discusión sobre el tamaño del Ejército Mexicano: 1876-1930"; en: *Estudios de Historia Moderna y Contemporánea de México*, No. 32 julio diciembre 2006, p. 45.

## **Organization of the Ministry of War and the Navy**

In the government of General Manuel González, the Ministry of War and the Navy followed the general guidelines for military organization that resulted from the provision "Definitive Organization of the Army," which derived from the decree of 28 June 1881. The new organization adopted the following structure at the same time and extended into the National Guard, Reserves; Public Security Forces and Rural Bodies<sup>8</sup>:

Ministry of War and the Navy (1881)<sup>9</sup>:

- ❖ Secretary
- ❖ Senior Officer
- ❖ 7 Sections
- ❖ Department Staff Special Corps
- ❖ Top Brass
- ❖ Military School
- ❖ Infantry Department
- ❖ Chivalry Department
- ❖ Artillery Department
- ❖ Engineers Department
- ❖ Naval Department
- ❖ Medical Department

In that same period, General González highlighted the following:

- ❖ The implementation of the General Army ordinance, which considered several reforms postulated in the first presidential period of Porfirio Diaz.
- ❖ The adoption of new tactics for infantry, cavalry and artillery.
- ❖ Creation of the Supreme Court of Military Justice.
- ❖ Improvement of the Special Staff Corps at the Ministry of War, which later extended to the military zones.
- ❖ Creation of the Corps of Military Administration.
- ❖ Moving the Military College from the Recogidas building in Mexico City to Chapultepec Castle<sup>10</sup>.
- ❖ Sending naval cadets to Europe.
- ❖ Establishment of a small arms factory.
- ❖ Acquisition of the warship "Juarez" and the boats "Xicoténcatl" and "Cuauhtémoc".
- ❖ Acquisition of 18,500 firearms.

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<sup>8</sup> The Rural Police known as *Los Rurales* image that helped encourage it to domestic tranquility needed by the government to attract foreign capital with which to finance its modernization program. See: Vanderwood, Paul J. (2002) "Los rurales. Una mirada a los orígenes de la policía mexicana"; en: *Renglones*, revista del ITESO, núm.51: Seguridad, la asignatura pendiente. Tlaquepaque, Jalisco: Instituto Tecnológico de Estudios Superiores de Occidente.

<sup>9</sup> Jesús de León Toral (et al). *El Ejército y Fuerza Aérea mexicanos*. Tomo I, 1979. México, Secretaría de la Defensa Nacional, p. 297.

<sup>10</sup> Renamed Heroico Colegio Militar by decree of Congress in 1949.

- ❖ Acquisition of equipment, machinery and tools for installation of the Arms Factory, Foundry Artillery and Maestranza.

With the return to power of Porfirio Diaz in 1884, the Special Branch of the General Staff assumed a significant role in the studies and projects for the reorganization of the Ministry of War and the Navy. The ambitious goal was maintaining a balance between army troops and armed forces budget as well the development of regulations about the disciplinary control and future projects; for example, between 1903 and 1904 the idea to institute conscription to set tables for the defense. In the last months of the Porfiriato the need military service looked for civilians could serve the nation during a war:

*"For 1907 there is the need for compulsory military service are based recruitment, which must lead to the definitive source of national defense, and is for us an important saving capitalísima and full recognition by our military means and unreservedly accepted most of the civil population. However there is a more generalized idea of what should be seen, creating a false opinion about the service and its consequences for the army; the idea seems to admit that compulsory military service due to the need to provide the bodies of troop men better and more moral constitution will into rows... To improve the quality of the troops, enough to raise wages enough to have Volunteers desired conditions and to improve the skills would be needed to improve methods of instruction. The general conditions of service are the object of military service during peace is to those who provide the necessary skills to perform satisfactorily in campaign mission that is relevant in the organization of the armed forces that the nation must have in case of a war."*<sup>11</sup>

## General Staff

The Regulations for the Secretary of War, dated 24 November 1881, delineated the powers of the Staff Department and identified 71 measures, of which 45 corresponded to wartime and 26 to peacetime. Fifteen years later, on 21 April 1896 General Francisco Troncoso, commissioned by the Minister of War, General Felipe Berriozábal, presented a draft for the general organization for the army, in which a General Staff would replace the Special Staff Corps of Staff. Troncoso's draft was very much like the general staff system being adopted by European and United States armies in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. It laid out the following key points:

### *General Staff*

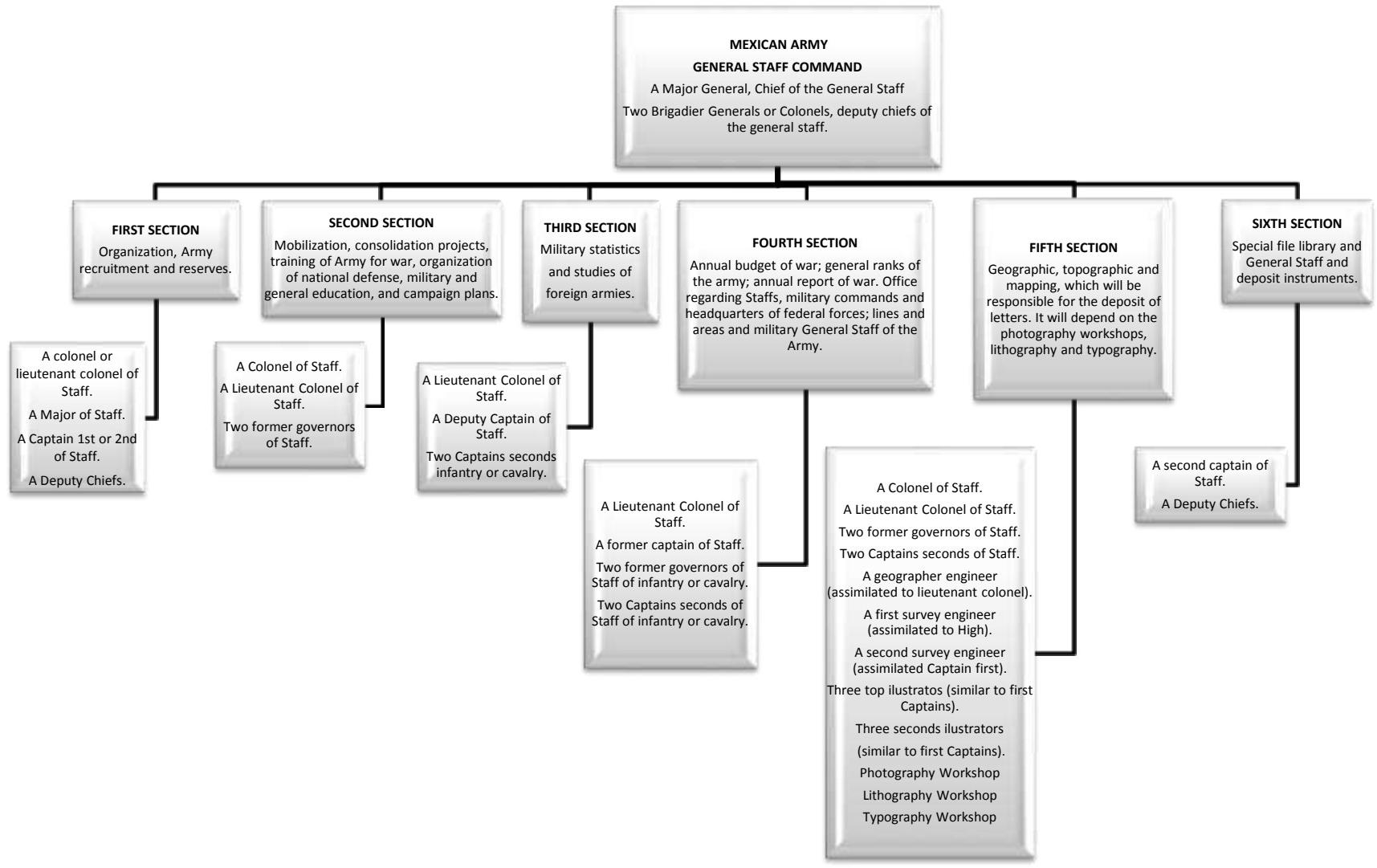
"Art. 52. The General Staff of the Army form the Department of General Staff of the War Department.  
 Art. 53. The General Staff is especially aimed at centralizing all work relating to the organization, mobilization, general service delivery, training and general regulations of the army, so that it is always ready and the best state to enter promptly into campaign.  
 Art. 54. The staff of the State General Staff and its division into sections for the office you have entrusted be as follows<sup>12</sup>."

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<sup>11</sup> "Estudios de organización, el reclutamiento", en: *Revista del Ejército y la Marina*, 1907, Tomo III, No.29, pp. 451-453.

<sup>12</sup> "Propuesta de Organización del Estado Mayor del General Francisco de P. y Troncoso", en: Eduardo Paz. *Reseña*

*Histórica del Estado Mayor Mexicano 1860-1911*, T. II Primera Parte, Secretaría de Guerra y Marina, incluido en Reseña Histórica del Estado Mayor 1860-1976. Colección del Oficial de Estado Mayor Mexicano. Tomo IV. México, Secretaría de la Defensa Nacional, 1976, pp. 56-59.



In addition to the draft for a general staff, Troncoso proposed the creation of the Geographic Explorer Commission. He intended to improve procedures for reconnaissance nationwide and to improve the design and conduct of military operations through the use of modern cartographic and geographic instruments available to the General Staff. Moreover, it also proposed the creation of a detailed map of the republic. In the new organization, an entirely military staff replaced civil service employees. These officers would be members of the Commission, in addition to the chiefs and officers of the Technical Section of the Military Zones.

In matters of education and military training, considering that the Military Academy was the only source for officers' school training and professional military education, special schools for officers and elementary schools for the troops were established and schools of specialties created: the Marksmanship School of Practice; the Medical-Military School; the Artillery School of Practice; the Non-Commissioned Officers' School of Application; the Military Candidate School (1905); the School of Military Bands; the Military School of Sergeants Major; the Fencing Master School for Foil and Sabre; and the School for Physical Education and Riding, which took office-based units stationed in Mexico City for field exercises through military maneuvers.

From 1877 until the first third of 1911, the Military College received special attention regarding the restructuring of the rules of procedure and curriculum studies for Engineers, Artillery, and Staff. It also addressed the possibility of separating the military training of future naval engineering officers by sending them to specialized naval training in Spain. Between 1879 and 1910 the curriculum of the Military College underwent up to 7 reforms and updates.

The 31 October 1900 Organic Law of the Army took effect on 31 July 1901. In order to implement new ideas it proposed, the government sent officers to the United States and Europe for refresher courses and advanced training and education. This additional education and training reflected in the increase of subjects and methods of instruction, the reformulation of the bases of organization of large units, the ways and means of communication, support services, and the study of foreign armies. The new law emphasized military intelligence gathering and analysis and counterintelligence protocols, and created a professional journal, the Magazine of the Army and Navy for the discussion of military affairs and culture in general.

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**War and Navy ministers in the governments of Manuel González and Porfirio Díaz<sup>13</sup>:**

War and Navy minister	Management period
Gral. y Lic. Pedro Ogazón	29 December 1876- 8 November 1879
Gral. Carlos Pacheco	15 November 1879- 30 November 1880
Gral. Gerónimo Treviño	1 December 1880- 31 December 1881
Gral. Francisco Naranjo	1 January 1881-30 November 1884
Gral. Pedro Hinojosa	1 December 1884- 19 March 1896
Gral. Felipe B. Berriozábal	20 March 1896-9 January 1900
Gral. Bernardo Reyes	25 January 1900-24 December 1902
Gral. Francisco Z. Mena	16 January 1903-15 March 1905
Gral. Manuel González Cosío	21 March 1905- 25 May 1911

In 1884, the Mexican Army was organized in a territorial division that delimit 11 Military Zones and 3 Military Commands. It fielded 27 Battalions of Infantry, 1 Battalion of Sappers, a Corps Invalids for light duties, Unidades de Cuadro (Auxiliares), Gendarmerie of the Army, 13 Cavalry Regiments, 4 Battalions of Artillery and Trains, Fixed Companies and Military Neighborhoods. In addition, the army had a Medical Corps, various staff officers, deposit of officers (Oficiales en Disponibilidad), the Supreme Military Court, the Military College, and the Military Prison. The Mexican army hierarchy was integrated as follows:

STRUCTURE OF THE FEDERAL ARMY: 1876-1914							
Year	Major General	Brigade General	Brigadier General	Army Chief	Army Officer	Troops	Overall
1876	3	17	-	857	3 320	33 291	37 488
1881	-	4	-	781	1 915	25 407	28 107
1883-1886	20	86	-	1 087	2 634	30 375	34 202
1896	11	63	-	1 048	2 230	26 760	30 112
1899	7	54	-	942	2 481	27 401	30 885
1901-1902	9	55	51	773	2 520	26 558	29 966
1903-1906	9	52	45	696	2 277	25 282	28 361
1906-1908	8	40	49	737	2 268	26 431	29 533
1910	7	39	53	510	1 756	23 065	25 430

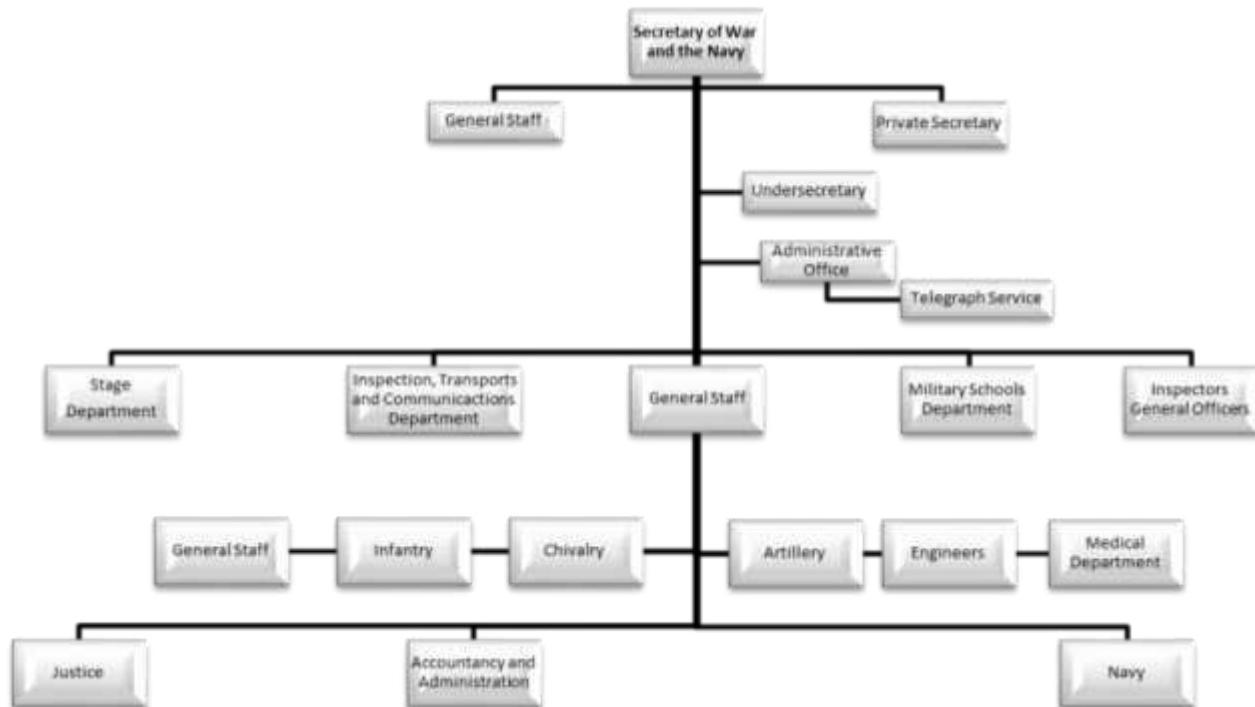
SOURCE: Mario Ramírez Rancanó. "La logística del Ejército Federal: 1881-1914"; en: Estudios de Historia Moderna y Contemporánea de México, Núm. 36, julio-diciembre 2008, p. 194.

In 1891 the Secretary of War and the Navy was divided into seven departments, 4 sections and a general archive; the military personnel were distributed as follows:

1. Special Corps of Staff
2. Corps and Military School
3. Artillery and manufacturing establishments war materials

<sup>13</sup> Jesús de León Toral (et al). *El Ejército y Fuerza Aérea mexicanos*. Tomo I, 1979. México, Secretaría de la Defensa Nacional, p. 315.

4. Navy
5. Infantry
6. Cavalry
7. Military Tribunals and Military Police
8. Invalid Battalion
9. Officers on availability (Jefes y Oficiales en disponibilidad)



SOURCE: Secretaría de la Defensa Nacional (1979). *El Ejército Mexicano: Historia desde sus orígenes hasta nuestros días*. Estado Mayor de la Defensa Nacional. México, Trillas, p. 367.

On 25 January 1900, General Bernardo Reyes was appointed Minister of War and the Navy. During his tenure, he created the Second Reserve, which was very popular among the lower classes in the population and reached up to 20,000 reservists. His successor, General Francisco Z. Mena founded the Military Candidate School in the old factory of San Fernando, Tlalpan, because there was no room for more students at the Military School. Among the objectives of the new school were: 1) Educating young men wishing to join the army as junior officers in the infantry, cavalry, or artillery; 2) Educating sergeants deserving of promotion to second lieutenant in theoretical military issues; and 3) Educating officers who were serving in the army, who had no professional training. From then, by decree, and because of the unification of doctrine, the rank of lieutenant for those who were not graduates of the Military Academy or Military Candidate School was banned<sup>14</sup>. This was a significant step forward in the professional education and preparation of the Mexican Army's officer corps.

<sup>14</sup> Jesús de León Toral. *Op Cit*, p. 320.

## **Armament**

According to President Díaz's master plan for the army's material and intellectual improvement and the consolidation of the military plan, the Arms Factory started operations in 1885 in order to standardize the weaponry used by the troops. In 1882, 18,500 weapons and ammunition Remington, system model which acquired imitation 9mm and a "*Sistema de cierre*" in 1891. In 1895 the government selected and purchased the 7 mm Mauser as the standard infantry rifle. It soon thereafter acquired Maxim machine guns. In 1897, the army acquired from Mauser 20,000 rifles, 6,000 carbines, and twelve million cartridges. In 1904, the Army purchased 150 7 mm Colt machine guns for the 5th Artillery Battalion. Despite the country's need for 7 mm ammunition, and because of its inability to reboore its existing small arms, the government purchased 7,000 rounds of 9 mm ammunition for its older Remingtons.<sup>15</sup>.

In 1900, the army began research to provide the cavalry with Mondragon automatic rifles and to complete its rearment with machine guns and Mausers. From France, it purchased 3 37 mm Hotchkiss automatic cannon, 19,000 bayonets for its Remingtons from Switzerland and an additional 4,800 rifles and sabers. In 1910, just before the start of the Mexican Revolution, the army purchased 56 7mm Hotchkiss machine guns to bolster the firepower of the infantry and 25 Danish-made Madsen machine guns of the same caliber. To end Mexico's dependence on foreign-purchased ammunition, the cartridge factory began producing on 1 July 1907.

On 23 February 1894, the government issued a decree creating the Ordnance Department, part of the Ministry of War and the Navy. It worked in conjunction with four direct-fire artillery battalions, a fixed (*fija*) artillery company (Veracruz), a general artillery park, the arms factory, artillery foundry, national arsenal, gunpowder factory, and the Mountain Artillery and Campaign Regulations. The government next purchased from France 16 steel-lined artillery pieces from Saint Chamond, Saint Chamond-Mondragon, and Schneider-Canet using the Bange breechloading system (a basic principle still in use in all modern artillery) as it experimented with Lahitolle, Reyfe, and Darmenciere. After much consideration and testing, the Army determined on 15 June 1909 that 75mm Saint-Chamond-Mondragón and 80 mm Schneider-Canet tubes with the Bange system would be standard. That year, the army equipped five field artillery battalions, a light-artillery battalion, and two battalions of mountain artillery with Bange system breechloaders.

In addition to standardizing the artillery's guns, the army reorganized its battalions into regiments in 1901. Each regiment had 4 batteries, with six 75 mm Schneider-Canet guns per battery; there were also two 8-battery regiments of with 80 mm Chamond-Mondragons, and a 4-battery regiment of horse artillery. This organization remained in effect until the end of the Porfiriato.

## **Military and Politics**

In principle, Porfirio Diaz sought to hold together the governors and the heads of the military zones, all of them considered political figures in their own right. Diaz appealed to their interests and shared regional control with them as he recognized that one of the purposes of the Mexican armed forces was maintaining internal peace and stability and suppressing regional armed uprisings. Often, the head of a Military

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<sup>15</sup> Jesús de León Toral. *Op Cit*, pp. 306-311.

Operations Area was the arbiter of local conflicts or served as an armed representative of President Diaz against the ambitions of the regional chiefs or factions. With the consolidation of the Diaz regime, the pacification of Mexico, and the increasing the importance of governors and generals, Diaz's control over the country declined.

Pacification did not occur overnight. After 1880, military operations took place in two regions in Sonora with campaigns against the Yaqui and Mayo Indians. Beginning in 1867, these operations lasted until 1902. The army also found itself in action in the Yucatan Peninsula with its reconquest of the Maya after the revolt of 1846. In addition to these operations, the army also faced periodic uprisings against the states's governments of San Luis Potosí, Chihuahua, Coahuila, and Guerrero with factional fighting in 1898 and 1901. In 1885, during the beginning session of Congress, Diaz announced that he foresaw preventive military action against an alleged invasion of Guatemala by Nicaragua, El Salvador, Costa Rica, and Honduras, which is why various battalions and regiments in the country's Midwest focused to form an army of 8,000 troops which later dissolved because the tension in the region gave way.

With the government of Manuel Gonzalez, the military territorial division scheme inherited from the government of Benito Juarez with only five divisions ended. In 1881, Gonzalez and his Minister of War, General Geronimo Trevino designated 11 military zones and four commands:

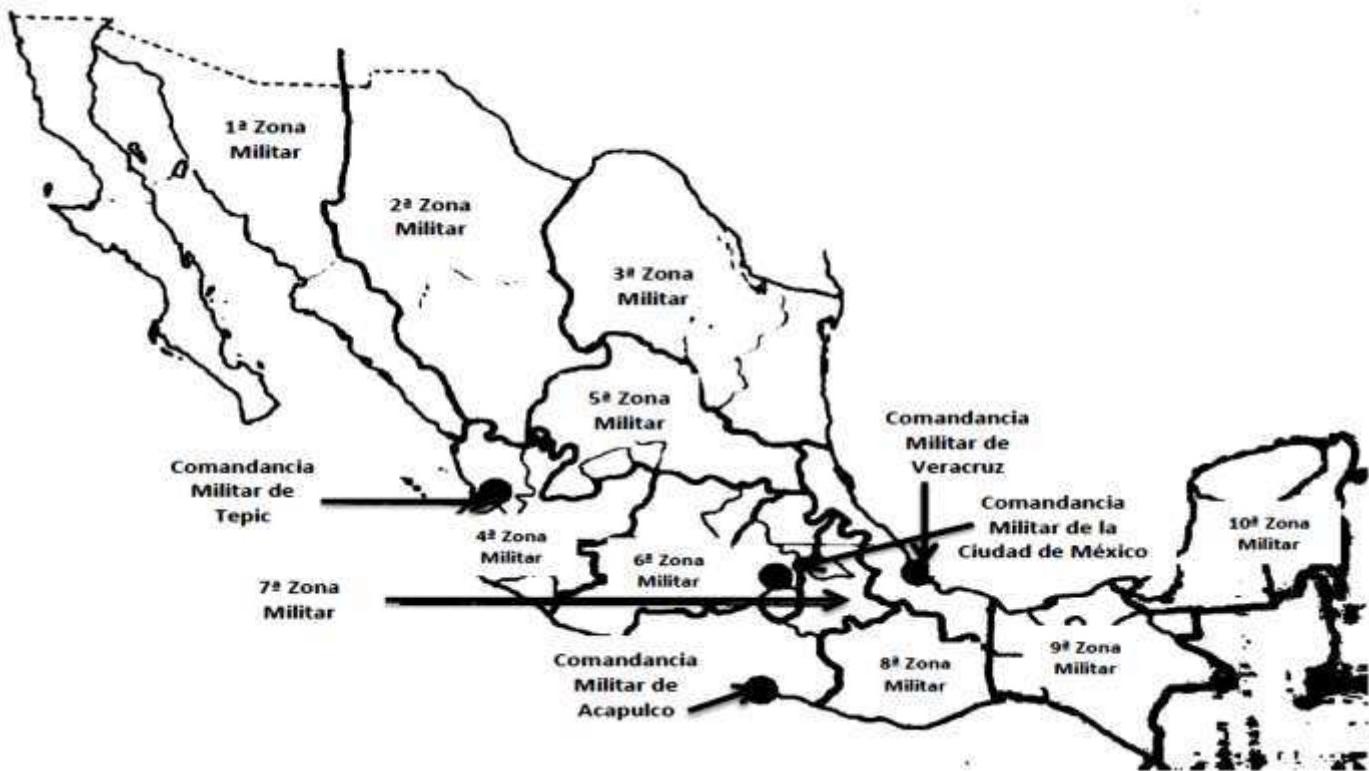
Comparative Military Areas, 1881 and 1901:

MILITARY AREA	ESTATES 1881	ESTATES 1901
FIRST	Sinaloa Sonora Territorio de Baja California	Sinaloa Sonora Territorio de Baja California
SECOND	Chihuahua Durango	Chihuahua Durango
THIRD	Coahuila Nuevo León	Coahuila Nuevo León Tamaulipas
FOURTH	Tamaulipas	Jalisco Colima
FIFTH	Jalisco Colima Tepic (Territorio)	San Luis Potosí Zacatecas Aguascalientes
SIXTH	San Luis Potosí Aguascalientes Zacatecas	Querétaro Guanajuato Michoacán
SEVENTH	Michoacán Querétaro Guanajuato	Puebla Tlaxcala Guerrero
EIGHTH	Distrito Federal Estado de México Hidalgo Morelos Guerrero	Oaxaca, except the Juchitán y Tehuantepec districts
NINTH	Puebla Tlaxcala	Chiapas, the districts Juchitán

	Veracruz	and Tehuantepec, (Oaxaca), Cantón de Minatitlán (Veracruz)
TENTH	Chiapas Oaxaca	Tabasco Campeche Yucatán
ELEVENTH	Campeche Tabasco Yucatán	---

SOURCE: Mario Ramírez Ranaño. "La logística del Ejército Federal: 1881-1914"; en: *Estudios de Historia Moderna y Contemporánea de México*, Núm. 36, julio-diciembre 2008, p. 194.

In the early twentieth century, Mexico is divided into 10 Military Zones and 4 Autonomous Military Commands (Acapulco, Mexico City, Tepic and Veracruz):



SOURCE: François Xavier Guerra. México. *Del Antiguo régimen a la Revolución*. Tomo I. México, Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1988, p. 106.

Besides governors and important positions in Congress and the civil administration, veterans of the civil and foreign wars of the nineteenth century held most of the important military commands. These veterans with a domain of experience ranging from political praxis derived from guerrilla warfare, to the numerous military uprisings and coups and improvised troops, were fading. A new generation of officers had graduated from the Military College with greater cultural and technical preparation but with less

willingness to exercise political power and a greater inclination to rise through disciplined garrison life. This new generation's rise was short-lived. The Revolution that cut short the length of a regime that had begun with a trend of military politicization was reversed by Victoriano Huerta's 1913 coup against Francisco Madero. Once more, the military had taken political office and seized states' governments.

By 1910, there were 10 military zones and 30 military headquarters. While the official figures, including effective rurals, numbered 30,000, in reality they did not exceed 14,000. Major military operations had developed in the course of railroad construction in northern Mexico, as this means of transport was essential for the mobilization of troops and equipment. One aspect to highlight is the late and insufficient mobilization of the army and the inappropriateness of its elements as the troops consisted of conscripts and came and fought forced by the abuse of power by officials. Except for than the rural gendarmerie, the army was the constant victim of ambushes. Its failure to cope with the revolutionary movement, coupled with the poor distribution of mountain artillery and machine guns, knowledge of the terrain, its weak intelligence services, lack of information, and poor navigation doomed it to failure. As the rebellion grew, the army was limited to the defense of cities. To the meet with the contingency, in April 1910 it increased the size of Diaz's rural forces, doubled the size of the army, and returned from exile in Europe General Bernardo Reyes. It was, however, too late to get in front of the Mexican Revolution.

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